

# THE HEALTH CONNECTION

ABILENE TAYLOR-COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT



## CERVICAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

### HPV VACCINATION IS CANCER PREVENTION

The best way to prevent cervical cancer is by getting the HPV vaccination, recommended for both boys and girls starting at age 11.

#### CERVICAL CANCER AT A GLANCE (DATA FROM 2018)

- IN TAYLOR COUNTY, IN 2018 THERE WERE 25 NEW CASES OF CERVICAL CANCER
- TAYLOR COUNTY INCIDENCE RATE IS 8.6 NEW CASES PER 100,000 PEOPLE
  - NATIONAL INCIDENCE RATE IS 9.3 NEW CASES PER 100,000 PEOPLE

(Source: CDC US Cancer Statistics)

## HEALTH MISINFORMATION

### WHY DOES IT GET SHARED?

Social Media has increased the spread of health misinformation. Health misinformation is any information that is false, inaccurate, or misleading according to the best available evidence at the time. It can be harmful and irresponsible to share this information, so how can we stop the spread?

By gaining a better understanding we can be aware of and help cut through misinformation. There are many ways information can be considered “false”. Misinformation is frequently based in truth, but sites sensationalize and mislead their audience by posting false, incomplete, or misleading information lacking context. By including incomplete quotes or editing media to leave out important context it can completely change a story. It is difficult to see this as misinformation at a first glance, but there are some steps we can take to ensure we are not promoting misinformation.

### HEALTH MISINFORMATION CHECKLIST

Use this checklist every time you come across health-related content you are not sure about.

- ☐ Did you check with the CDC or local public health department to see whether there is any information about the claim being made?
- ☐ Did you ask a credible health care professional such as your doctor or nurse if they have any additional information?
- ☐ Did you type the claim into a search engine to see if it has been verified by a credible source?
- ☐ Did you look at the “About Us” page on the website to see if you can trust the source?
- ☐ If you're not sure, don't share!

Provided by the Office of the Surgeon General

Health misinformation can be very harmful even when it is not shared maliciously. Most often health misinformation is being shared because the sharer wants to protect the people they care about. They might be doing so verbally or digitally through social media channels, all while being unaware it is false information.

Best practice is - ***If You're Not Sure, Don't Share!*** It is not worth the potential harm it could bring to your community. Unless you are sure of the health information you are wanting to share don't pass it on.

LEARN MORE ONLINE AT  
[BIT.LY/MISINFORMATION\\_PDF](https://bit.ly/misinformation_pdf)

## IN THIS ISSUE

**Health Misinformation**

**WIC Wellness**

**A word from Dr. Goodnight**

**What is Health Literacy**

**New Healthy Habits**

**PHEP: Winter Weather**

**Slice of Life Coalition**



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Abilene Taylor County  
Public Health District**



## WINTER PRODUCE

It's important to eat fresh and colorful produce all year long. To help keep costs low and variety and flavor high we recommend looking to seasonal produce, as a rule of thumb. Winter produce does not disappoint in flavor, color, or variety. When you are planning your meals keep these seasonal favorites in mind:

LEARN MORE ONLINE AT  
[SNAPED.FNS.USDA.GOV/SEASONAL-PRODUCE-GUIDE](https://www.snaped.fns.usda.gov/seasonal-produce-guide)

- Fruits - Apples, Bananas, Kiwi, Lemons, Limes, Oranges, Grapefruit, Pineapples, & Pears
- Root Vegetables - Carrots, Parsnips, Rutabagas, Turnips, beets, Potatoes, Sweet Potatoes, & Yams
- Leafy Greens - Kale, Collard, Swiss Chard, Cabbage, Brussels Sprouts
- Other Vegetables - Avocado, Celery, Leeks, Onions, Herbs, Pumpkin & Winter Squash



Author: Becky Hardin - The Cookie Rookie

### ROASTED BRUSSELS SPROUTS

with Blue Cheese, Pear,  
and Toasted Walnuts

#### INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 2 tbsp walnuts chopped
- ☐ 2 tbsp olive oil
- ☐ 1 pound brussels sprouts halved
- ☐ pinch salt & pepper
- ☐ 1/2 C blue cheese crumbles
- ☐ 2 pears sliced and chopped
- ☐ 1 tsp lemon juice

YUM!

PREP: 5 MINUTES | COOK: 10 MINUTES | TOTAL: 15 MINUTES | SERVES: 4

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. HEAT & SET ASIDE **WALNUTS** IN A SKILLET OVER MEDIUM HEAT UNTIL TOASTED.
2. Heat **oil** in a large skillet over medium heat.
3. Add **brussels sprouts** and season with **salt & pepper** to taste. Without stirring, cook covered for about 7 minutes.
4. Uncover and add **walnuts, pears, & lemon juice**; stirring to reveal the caramelized **brussels sprouts**. Continue cooking for approx 3 more mins.
5. Take off of heat and add **blue cheese crumbles**. **Serve warm**



## A MESSAGE FROM DR. GOODNIGHT

### RESILIENCE THROUGH ADVERSITY

Resilience is the word that defines the Abilene Taylor County Public Health District in 2021 because it implies hope, faith and possibilities. While dealing with the sudden relocation of staff and services due to flood damage from burst pipes caused by the February 2021 freeze, the ATCPHD continued to respond to our community's wellbeing and health. The Director, Annette Lerma, along with the Health Department's Division Heads and staff demonstrated innovation, professionalism and character in dealing with this crisis of nature.



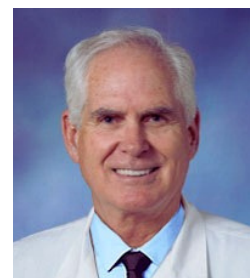
2021 showed how the ATCPHD collaborated with our community to provide education and multiple Covid vaccination clinics. These programs are ongoing and have expanded from adults to include children. All this reactionary effort to the Covid-19 public health threat was coordinated while the Health District's programs: Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Epidemiology, Mercy Clinic, COACH Clinic, Texas Physical Activity and Nutrition Program, plus many others continued their operational service to our community.

Having been involved with the ATCPHD for the past two months, I am impressed with the dedicated staff and leaders. The community members of the Health Advisory Board demonstrate how important collaboration is to the Health Department. Their questions, concerns and input are invaluable to our community health goals.

I look forward to seeing what the ATCPHD will accomplish in 2022.

#### DR. GARY GOODNIGHT

HEALTH AUTHORITY FOR THE  
ABILENE TAYLOR COUNTY  
PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT



# HEALTH LITERACY

## WHAT IS IT & WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Health literacy has been defined by the CDC as the degree to which individuals have the ability to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.

This is not necessarily something we think about when we are healthy, but we should all be better prepared for future health needs. A large part of this being, health literacy.



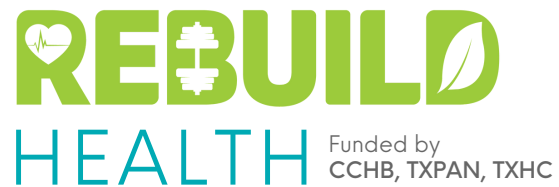
There are many factors to consider involving your health literacy including understanding the healthcare system, your ability to communicate with providers (and the confidence to ask them questions when you need better understanding), and the ability to find health information and understand basic medical terms. Additionally, other factors are personal mental and physical limitations.

If you lack confidence in your ability to understand the health care system and medical terminology, you are definitely not alone! Be up front with your provider and don't be afraid to ask questions to help you understand. Most doctors want to help you understand your health and don't mind answering questions and providing other resources that may help you.

If you feel you do not have a strong health literacy foundation it may affect your ability to make good decisions about your health, to seek the proper care you need, to follow prescribed treatment programs, to manage illnesses (especially a chronic disease), and to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Take some time to familiarize yourself with health literacy and ensure you are prepared to take care of your health. Consider reaching out to those in your life who may have a limitation in one of the mentioned areas and offer support in their health journey.

LEARN MORE ABOUT HEALTH LITERACY ONLINE AT  
[BIT.LY/HEALTH\\_LITERACY\\_MEDLINE](https://bit.ly/health_literacy_medline)



## NEW HEALTHY HABITS

### SUPPORTING HEALTHY HABITS IN THE NEW YEAR

With the New Year comes new resolutions, and hopefully some new healthy habits. When forming new health goals, whether for the new year or at any time throughout the year it is important to remember some key steps to help support the goal and be more successful.

**Make your goals attainable.** Focusing on how the achievement of the goal will benefit you and your overall quality of life is a great way to encourage you to be successful, but it can be daunting if the goal you have set is too large or seems out of reach. Two ways to combat this challenge are to break them down into smaller sub-goals that are more achievable, and to make sure your goals are S.M.A.R.T.

**S.M.A.R.T goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely.** This acronym was coined in the journal Management Review in 1981, and it is a great way to add actionable steps and an ability to track your goals and monitor your success every step of the way.

**Prepare for challenges.** Based on data collected by yougov, on average fewer than 50% of all New Year's resolutions made are kept. A reason for this low success rate has a lot to do with how people prepare for challenges they may face.

To help combat the fatigue that challenges bring, try some of these tips! Write out your resolutions, plan your follow-through and track your progress, be okay with slipping up but have a plan to get back on track, make your resolution public for added accountability, celebrate your successes (even the small ones), and build a support system to lean on. Most importantly any time you go into a new health goal, **believe in yourself!** You can do it!

**It may be after the New Year, but it is never too late to implement some new health goals.**



## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

### STAY SAFE DURING WINTER WEATHER

Know your risk for Winter Storms. Pay attention to weather reports and warnings of freezing weather and winter storms. Listen for emergency information and alerts.



#### Preparing for Winter Weather

Prepare your home **NOW** to keep out the cold with insulation, caulking and weather stripping. Learn how to keep pipes from freezing. Install and test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors with battery backups. In case of a power outage, go to a designated warming location with power if you can do so safely. If you plan to shelter in place, gather supplies ahead of time for several days without power. Keep in mind each person's specific needs, including medication, baby formula & feminine products. Remember the needs of your pets. Have extra batteries for radios and flashlights. In the event of impending severe winter weather, keep your vehicles & generators fueled.

#### Winter Emergency Home Kit can include:

- Water (1 gallon per person per day for several days)
- Food (3-5 days of non-perishable food is recommended)
- Manual can opener (the power may be out)
- Flashlights & batteries
- First Aid Kit
- Baby Wipes & plastic bags (sanitation in case water is out)
- Wrench or Pliers (to turn off utilities if needed)
- Cell Phone Back up batteries
- Sleeping Bags for extra warmth
- Fire Extinguisher
- Fire Wood & matches
- Baby Formula and/or Pet food
- Family's Medications
- Feminine Products
- Paper plates/bowls & plastic utensils
- Books, board games, puzzles

#### Safety Tips

- Stay off roads if at all possible. If trapped in your car, then stay inside.
- Limit your time outside. If you need to go outside, then wear layers of warm clothing. Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.
- Reduce the risk of a heart attack by avoiding overexertion when shoveling snow and walking in the snow.



#### IMPORTANT:

**Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.**

Only use generators and grills outdoors and away from windows.

Never heat your home with a gas stove or oven.

LEARN MORE ONLINE AT  
**READY.GOV/WINTERWEATHER**



**Slice of Life**  
COALITION  
FUNDED BY TXHC

## SLICING UP '22

### MAKE 2022 YOUR BEST YEAR WITH THESE WELLBEING TIPS

The new year brings about a renewed sense of purpose for many. In fact, 25% of Americans who made 2022 New Year's resolutions say they've set a goal to live healthier this year. So, how can one make sure they stay on task? Here are three great healthy habits to get you started off on the right foot:

- **Healthier Eating:** Dr. Rekha B. Kumar suggests that you eat enough fruits, vegetables and whole grains throughout the day, with a focus on protein in the morning. A high protein breakfast will keep your blood sugar and some "hunger hormones" more stable throughout the day, helping to control your appetite.

- **Exercise Consistently:** Staying physically active helps with cardiovascular and muscular health. Exercise has also been shown to reduce stress and improve overall mood, so try to squeeze in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise each week, the minimum recommended by the American Heart Association.
- **Get Enough Sleep:** Dr. Daniel Barone recommends keeping a regular sleep schedule and getting about eight hours of sleep a night. Establishing a regular bedtime and wake-up time, avoiding caffeine later in the day, setting boundaries around your media consumption and avoiding naps will go a long way to feeling refreshed.

(Source: Health Matters-New York Presbyterian )



#### UPCOMING EVENTS:

- CERVICAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH - JANUARY
- NATIONAL BLOOD DONOR MONTH - JANUARY
- **SAVE THE DATE: ATCPHD EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS EVENT - PUBLIC HEALTH DAY APRIL 14TH**

ABILENE TAYLOR COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT | 850 N. 6TH ST. | 325.692.5600